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**Report of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth  
Parliamentary Association**

**65<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference**

**Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada**

**August 20 to 26, 2022**

## Report

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) is the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's (CPA) annual general meeting. It provides an opportunity for parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth to come together to share best practices, discuss current issues and provide guidance to the Association's secretariat. This year, the CPA Canada Region hosted the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC in Halifax, Nova Scotia from 20 to 26 August 2022 under the theme "Inclusive, Accessible, Accountable and Strong Parliaments: The Cornerstone of Democracy and Essential for Development."

The 65<sup>th</sup> CPC included additional conferences and meetings such as the 38<sup>th</sup> CPA Small Branches Conference, the 7<sup>th</sup> triennial conference of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, the 65<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly, and meetings of the CPA Executive Committee and the Society of Clerks at the Table.

Over 600 parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and decision makers from across the Commonwealth attended the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC, including a delegation from the Canadian Branch of the CPA. This delegation was part of the larger Canada Region delegation, which included representatives from several provincial and territorial legislatures.

The Canadian Branch was represented by the following official delegates:

- Ms. Alexandra Mendès, MP, Chair of the Canadian Branch and head of the delegation;
- Ms. Iqra Khalid, MP, Vice-Chair of the Canadian Branch;
- Mr. Terry Duguid, MP, and member of the International Executive Committee;
- the Honourable Salma Atallahjan, Senator;
- the Honourable Rosemary Moodie, Senator;
- Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau, MP;
- Ms. Lianne Rood, MP; and
- Mr. Warren Steinley, MP.

Several federal parliamentarians also attended the conference as observers:

- the Honourable Jane Cordy, Senator;
- the Honourable Jim Quinn, Senator;
- Ms. Brenda Shanahan, MP;
- Ms. Sonia Sidhu, MP; and
- Mr. Robert Kitchen, MP.

The delegation of the Canadian Branch of the CPA was accompanied by Mr. Rémi Bourgault, Association Secretary and, from the Library of Parliament, Ms. Brittany Collier, Advisor.

The delegation of the Canadian Branch of the CPA has the honour to present its report on the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC and its additional meetings and conferences. This report discusses the meetings of the CPA Executive Committee, the 7<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, the 38<sup>th</sup> CPA Small Branches Conference, the 65<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary Conference, and the General Assembly.

### **Meetings of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's Executive Committee**

The CPA Executive Committee (EXCO) held meetings on 21 and 22 August 2022. The Honourable Anthony Rota, Speaker of the House of Commons and President of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and Mr. Terry Duguid, MP, member of the Canadian Branch and EXCO, attended these meetings. On August 22, 2022, the Honourable Anthony Rota, Speaker of the House of Commons and President of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Honourable Keith Bain, Speaker of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, hosted a dinner for EXCO members.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians**

Founded in 1989, the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) is a network of women members of CPA parliaments and legislatures. The CWP network

provides a means of building the capacity of women elected to Parliament to be more effective in their roles, improving the awareness and ability of all Parliamentarians, male and female, and encouraging them to include a gender perspective in all aspects of their role – legislation, oversight and representation and helping Parliaments to become gender-sensitive institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Prior to the official opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> triennial conference, the CWP held a business meeting on August 21, 2022. During this meeting, the Honourable Dr. Zainab Gimba, MP, House of Representatives at the Federal Parliament of Nigeria was elected as the new Chairperson of the CWP.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference was opened by the Honourable Myrna Driedger, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and CWP President. The Honourable Valerie Woods, MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of Belize and Vice-Chairperson of the CWP also provided opening remarks. The four conference workshops including interventions by Canadian parliamentarians, and conference recommendations are summarized below.

### **Workshop A: Empowering Women Parliamentarians and Promoting Diversity/Intersectionality**

Workshop A focussed on the participation of women and women with disabilities and other intersecting identities in parliament. Participants exchanged experiences from their

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<sup>1</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, [Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians \(CWP\)](#).

various legislatures and discussed strategies to improve the representation of these groups within parliaments, such as quotas at the party and parliamentary levels, benchmarks, legal requirements as well as systems of rewards and penalties. The Honourable Valerie Woods, Speaker of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of Belize chaired the workshop, while the following led the discussion with presentations:

- Ms. Sunita Duggal, MP, Lok Sabha, Parliament of India;
- Ms. Laura Kanushu, MP, Parliament of Uganda; and
- Ms. Sneh Aurora, Head of London Office, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative.

During the workshop, delegates from the Canadian Branch of the CPA contributed to the discussion. Senator Ataullahjan raised the importance of encouraging young women to participate in politics, Ms. Khalid discussed the challenges associated with social media and the participation of women in politics while Ms. Sidhu underscored some of the measures adopted by the Parliament of Canada to improve women's participation.

The workshop concluded with the adoption of the following recommendation: "In promoting women's empowerment and greater diversity in public office, Parliamentarians and legislatures should take an institution-centric approach towards lasting change."

### **Workshop B: Effectively Combatting all Forms of Abuse and Harassment in Parliament**

Workshop B focussed on the initiatives in place or in development in various Commonwealth parliaments to combat abuse and harassment, and the role of parliamentarians in addressing the issue. Panellists also discussed social media and harassment, as well as the connection between abuse, harassment, and women's representation in Parliament.

The workshop was chaired by the Honourable Myrna Driedger, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and CWP President. Other panellists gave presentations to lead the discussion:

- Ms. Sharon Claydon, MP, Parliament of Australia;
- Ms. Rohini Kumari Kavirante, MP, Parliament of Sri Lanka; and
- Ms. Alice Lau Kiong Yieng, MP, Parliament of Malaysia.

During the workshop, Senator Ataullahjan discussed harassment and violence prevention training in the Canadian House of Commons and Senate and asked about safe spaces for men and women to come forward when they have experienced harassment. Senator Moodie asked about how to engage and involve those outside of Parliament including the media in combatting harassment in Parliament.

Representatives from provincial and territorial legislatures also participated in this workshop. The Honourable Myrna Driedger shared her work to prevent and address harassment and abuse in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. Catherine Fife, Member of Provincial Parliament, Legislative Assembly of Ontario asked a question about bullying and harassment on social media. Julie Green, MLA, Northwest Territories shared part of the legislature's harassment policy.

Workshop participants endorsed the following recommendation: "National and sub-national legislatures across the Commonwealth should ensure that their Parliaments have policies and legislation in place to effectively tackle harassment and abuse in all its forms for all persons in Parliament."

### **Workshop C: Financial Empowerment of Women and Gender-Sensitive Budgeting**

In workshop C participants shared the experiences of their parliaments related to gender-sensitive budgeting and the financial empowerment of women. Discussion also focussed on the effects of trade rules on women and what parliaments can do to address them and ensure financial inclusivity.

At this workshop, two panellists gave presentations:

- Ms. Claire Baker, MP, Scottish Parliament; and
- Ms. Anoush der Boghossian, Head of Trade and Gender, World Trade Organization.

During the workshop, Ms. Khalid discussed Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's Women Entrepreneurship Strategy and the importance of financial literacy as a way to ensure financial equality between genders in the long term. Representatives from provincial legislatures also participated in the workshop. Ms. Fife asked a question about procurement and ways to ensure that those getting contracts are as diverse as the populations they are serving. Janet Routledge, MLA, British Columbia discussed the connection between gender sensitive budgets and social return on investment.

The workshop concluded with the adoption of the following recommendation: "Commonwealth Parliaments must ensure that all budgets incorporate a gender lens and all policies and agreements are gender sensitive."

### **Workshop D: Promoting Gender-Sensitive Parliaments Post-pandemic**

Discussions at workshop D considered the characteristics of gender-sensitive parliaments and how they could contribute to increasing women's representation in Parliament. The workshop also considered the changes made by parliaments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and ways that parliaments could become gender-sensitive institutions. Panellists and participants shared initiatives underway in their parliaments to make them more gender-sensitive institutions.

The Honourable Bridgid Annisette-George, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago chaired the session. Other panellists gave presentations to guide the discussion:

- the Right Honourable Dame Maria Miller, MP, House of Commons, United Kingdom;
- Ms. Iqra Khalid, MP, House of Commons, Canada; and
- Ms. Jacqui Dean, MP and Assistant Speaker of the House of Representatives, Parliament of New Zealand.

During the workshop, Ms. Khalid's presentation discussed gender-sensitive initiatives in Canada's Parliament including gender-sensitive budgeting and parental leave for Members of Parliament. She also discussed hybrid parliaments and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on women in Canada. Ms. Khalid also described her work in creating a women's council in her constituency.

At the workshop Ms. Rood noted that women parliamentarians can push parliament to make gender sensitive changes. She explained that women should think of themselves as empowered and able to represent their constituents, noting that women parliamentarians should be selected for key roles as a result of their accomplishments (rather than to fulfil a quota). Ms. Mendès expressed that, in her view, women's issues are always seen as minority issues, but that women are not minorities. Lisa Sandler, MLA, Northwest Territories discussed how virtual parliamentary meetings, adopted during the pandemic, have helped her better balance family and work obligations by cutting down on significant travel times normally required for parliamentarians in her legislature.

The workshop concluded with participants endorsing the following recommendation: "Commonwealth Parliaments should use lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic to proactively explore gender sensitive practices and policies."

### **38<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Small Branches Conference**

The CPA Small Branches network represents small national and subnational jurisdictions of the CPA with populations under 500,000 inhabitants.<sup>2</sup> The network aims to identify the specific parliamentary strengthening, development and cooperation needs of small jurisdictions.

During the conference, the Honourable Joy Burch, MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory was elected CPA Small Branches Chairperson.

### **Workshop A: Disaster Risk Preparedness for Small Jurisdictions**

Workshop A explored strategies, initiatives and policies small jurisdictions have undertaken to minimize the effects of disasters, especially those related to the environment. The objective of the workshop was to better understand disaster risk preparedness and underscore the importance of planning. This workshop's discussion was led by Professor Kate Cochrane of the Institute of Hazard Risk and Resilience at Durham University and Head of Resilience at the National Health Survey Highlands in

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<sup>2</sup> Note that a constitutional amendment was adopted during the 65<sup>th</sup> General Assembly that increased the population threshold for small jurisdictions to under one million inhabitants.

Scotland and the Honourable Fekitamoeloa Utoikamanu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Tonga.

The workshop concluded with the adoption of the following recommendation: “Parliaments from small jurisdictions should build on and find effective ways to hold governments to account for strategies aimed at preparing for and managing disaster risk, including through the use of oversight and accountability mechanisms at their disposal.”

### **Workshop B: Building Sustainable Economies in Small Branches**

Workshop B focussed on the challenges faced by small branches (CPA jurisdictions with less than one million in population) in achieving economic growth and sustainable development. Participants exchanged ideas, strategies and experiences on how to overcome various obstacles. They also discussed the role of parliamentarians in encouraging governments to meet their sustainable development goals and holding them to account. During the discussion, participants underscored the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on their jurisdictions. They also emphasized the disproportionate impact of climate change on small jurisdictions despite their relatively low carbon emissions contribution. This workshop was chaired by the Honourable Mark Monaghan, MLA, Acting Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory of Australia, while the following presenters led the discussion:

- the Honourable Angelo Farrugia, Speaker, House of Representatives, Parliament of Malta;
- the Honourable Katherine Ebanks-Wilks, MP, Deputy Speaker, Parliament of the Cayman Islands; and
- Dr. Laurie Brinklow, Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, Canada.

The workshop concluded with the adoption of the following recommendation: “Through their legislative, oversight and representative functions, Parliamentarians from small jurisdictions should actively engage in economic development policies to ensure that they are responsive to all societal groups, are environmentally sensitive and are broadly aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.”

### **Workshop C: Financial Scrutiny and Oversight: How Can Small Parliaments Ensure Effective Accountability?**

Workshop C focussed on the role of parliamentarians in ensuring financially accountable governments. During the discussion, participants shared strategies and initiatives they have used throughout the budgeting process to promote transparency and accountability. The importance of public accounts committees was also discussed extensively. This workshop was chaired by Mr. Churchill Gill, member of the National Assembly of Seychelles, while the following presenters led the discussion:

- the Honourable Akierra Missick, MP, House of Assembly, Turks and Caicos;

- Ms. Joann Corkish, Deputy Clerk of Tynwald, Clerk of the Legislative Council, Isle of Man; and
- Ms. Isabelle Watkinson, Student and Researcher, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

The workshop concluded with the adoption of the following recommendation: “Parliaments should have the necessary independence and resources, including any necessary training and capacity building opportunities, to undertake effective financial scrutiny and oversight.”

#### **Workshop D: Wellbeing Indicators for CPA Small Branches**

Workshop D looked beyond traditional methods of evaluating wellbeing that may be more relevant for measuring development and progress in smaller jurisdictions than traditional methods of evaluation, such as GDP. These may include the consideration of social factors such as psychological and physiological health as well as happiness and democratic engagement. Participants also discussed and shared initiatives and policies undertaken in their jurisdiction to improve wellbeing. This workshop was chaired by the Honourable Reginald Farley, President of the Senate of Barbados, while the following presenters led the discussion:

- the Honourable Jeanie McLean, MLA, Legislative Assembly, Yukon;
- the Honourable Michael Pettersson, MLA, Legislative Assembly, Australian Capital Territory; and
- Dr. Laurie Brinklow, Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, Canada.

The Honourable Jeanie McLean explained that in 2016, the government of Yukon began circulating a survey to better understand the wellbeing of people in that territory. Since then, the survey has evolved, and the results are being used to shape public policy. Likewise, Dr. Laurie Brinklow provided an overview of the “PEI Well-being Project,” which aims to assess and improve the well-being and quality of life for people in that province.

The workshop concluded with the adoption of the following recommendation: “Through their legislative, oversight and representative functions, Parliamentarians from small jurisdictions should use well-being indicators to guide legislative scrutiny in order to further national growth.”

#### **Meetings of the Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities Network**

The Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) network was established in 2018 to “facilitate activities and programmes to champion and increase the representation of persons with disabilities in Commonwealth parliaments and to work towards the mainstreaming of disability considerations in all CPA activities and programmes.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, [Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities \(CPwD\)](#).



The Regional Champions of the CPwD met in advance of the opening of the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC. The meeting was chaired by the Alternate CPA Canada Regional Champion, the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, MP, and Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion. At the meeting, the Honourable Laura Kanushu, MP, Parliament of Uganda was elected as the new CPwD Chairperson and the Honourable Senator Paul Richards, Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago was elected as the CPwD Vice Chairperson.

### **65<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference**

The 65<sup>th</sup> CPC was officially opened by Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada and Vice-Patron of the CPA. She spoke about challenges facing the world, including food insecurity and innovative approaches underway to address it, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in Canada, and the importance of the Commonwealth as a group of nations with common objectives that work together.

The Honourable Anthony Rota, Speaker of the House of Commons and President of the CPA welcomed delegates to Halifax and noted that the conference provides an opportunity to learn from one another, network, and expand our understanding of how to promote the values of the CPA. The Honourable George J. Furey, Speaker of the Senate of Canada read the goodwill message to the conference from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Patron of the CPA and Head of the Commonwealth. During the preparation of this report, the Canadian Branch of the CPA was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The Queen was the Head of the Commonwealth and served as patron of the CPA since 1989.

The 65<sup>th</sup> CPC comprised activities including eight workshops and the 65<sup>th</sup> annual General Assembly, all discussed in more detail below.

### **Workshop A: Remaining Relevant in Response to a Pandemic: The Role and Responsibilities of Parliament**

Workshop A focussed on the measures undertaken by the Canadian House of Commons and the Ontario and Alberta Legislatures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. There was also discussion of oversight of the executive during a pandemic, the science behind pandemics, the phases of a pandemic, communicating with the public during a pandemic, and preparing for the next pandemic. During the discussion portions of the workshop, participants shared their experiences and measures put in place in their parliaments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Chris d'Entremont, MP and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons moderated the workshop. Three other panellists gave presentations:

- the Honourable Nathan Cooper, Speaker of the Alberta Legislative Assembly;
- Ms. Catherine Fife, MPP, Legislative Assembly of Ontario; and
- Dr. Lisa Barrett, Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada, Assistive Professor in the Division of Infectious Diseases, Department of Medicine, Dalhousie University.

During the workshop, Senator Cordy asked a question about how to develop public trust during a pandemic, while Senator Moodie asked a question about hybrid parliaments. There were also interventions from representatives from Canadian provincial and territorial legislatures. For example, Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, MLA, Nunavut asked a question about the importance of access to food and housing, recognizing that there will be future pandemics. Susan Leblanc, MLA, Nova Scotia asked about the proportion of a health budget that should be dedicated to public health.

At the end of the workshop, participants endorsed the following recommendation: “Parliaments (both large and small) should develop contingency plans for future pandemics and crises. The contingency plan should facilitate the discharge of Parliaments in all of its roles and responsibilities and make allowances for procedural changes, public consultation where possible and be adaptable in accordance with the specific crisis.”

### **Workshop B: Role of Parliaments in Achieving Sustainable Development**

Workshop B focussed on the role of parliamentarians in implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to the environment and climate change. The discussion primarily centred on oversight and accountability as well as the role of larger states in financing global initiatives.

This workshop was chaired by the Honourable Keith Bain, Speaker of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly while the following presenters lead the discussion:

- the Honourable Savitri Sonia Parag, MP, Minister of Public Service, National Assembly of Guyana;
- the Honourable Gervais Henrie, MNA, National Assembly of the Seychelles; and
- the Honourable Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, Speaker, Parliament of Fiji.

The workshop concluded with the adoption of the following recommendation: “Members of Commonwealth Parliaments should familiarise themselves with the SDGs, their indicators and the mechanisms that they have to contribute toward their implementation by 2030.”

### **Workshop C: A People’s Parliament: Accessibility Through Innovation**

Workshop C focussed on innovations that have increased the accessibility of parliaments for individuals represented by the institution. It considered the connection between the digitization of Parliament and parliamentary representation, as well as the pros and cons of virtual/hybrid approaches. The session also explored other non-technological approaches and adaptations that took place during the pandemic and whether these will continue in the future.

Three panellists spoke at the workshop:

- the Honourable Om Birla, MP, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Parliament of India;

- the Honourable Masizole Mnqasela, MPP, Speaker of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament; and
- Ms. Rachel Ong, MP, Parliament of Singapore.

The workshop concluded with endorsement of the following recommendation: “Parliaments should remain open and accessible institutions to all members of the public that they represent and should, where possible and appropriate, explore modern and innovative approaches to meeting this requirement.”

#### **Workshop D: Professional Development for Parliamentarians – Opportunities and Challenges for Small Parliaments**

Workshop D focussed on the importance of professional development for parliamentarians. Participants also discussed policies and strategies that have been implemented in some parliaments to overcome challenges faced by parliamentarians wishing to take professional development opportunities. This workshop was chaired by the Honourable Barbara Webster-Bourne, Speaker, Anguilla House of Assembly while the following presenters led the discussion:

- the Honourable Jonathan O’Dea, Speaker, New South Wales Legislative Assembly, Australia;
- Ms. Inna Popova, Director, Professional and Corporate Education;
- Ms. Alisha Todd, Director General, ParlAmericas; and
- Ms. Lydia Buchanan, Deputy Head of Programmes – Bilateral Engagement and CPA Parliamentary Academy Lead.

The workshop concluded with the adoption of the following recommendation: “A core responsibility of all Parliaments (both large and small) should include the provision or facilitation of professional development for Parliamentarians. Such provision should be innovative and adaptive, and tailored to the needs of new and or more experienced Members.”

#### **Workshop E: Access to Assistive Technologies: Implementation of Standards Across the Commonwealth Parliaments**

Workshop E focussed on assistive technology and its effects on the lives of people with disabilities. It discussed examples of accessible hardware and software developed by Microsoft, accessibility in Parliament and ways to improve access to assistive technology for persons with disabilities. Some speakers shared their personal experiences with disability and use of assistive technology. Mr. Paul Maynard, MP of the United Kingdom House of Commons chaired the session. Other panellists gave presentations:

- Mr. Dave Dame, Director of Accessibility, Microsoft;
- the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, MP, and Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion;

- Ms. Nafisa Shah, MP, National Assembly of Pakistan; and
- the Honourable Senator Ras Adiba Mohd Radzi, Parliament of Malaysia.

During her presentation, the Honourable Carla Qualtrough shared how assistive technology has been beneficial throughout her life. She discussed her participation in Parliament and Cabinet as a person with a disability. She also outlined the development of the *Accessible Canada Act* and work underway at Accessible Standards Canada.

During the workshop, Ms. Khalid asked about the definition of disabilities and how to address cost barriers to make parliaments with limited resources more accessible. The Honourable Carla Qualtrough also responded to questions from delegates and discussed, for example, the employment challenges faced by persons with disabilities.

The workshop concluded with the endorsement of the following recommendation: “Parliaments must adopt assistive technologies to enhance the accessibility of their institutions to persons with disabilities.”

### **Workshop F: Building Gender Sensitive Parliaments**

Workshop F focussed on the ongoing challenges of establishing gender sensitive parliaments even though women have been trying to achieve gender parity for decades and represent half the world’s population. Participants provided updates on progress being made in their respective jurisdictions and exchanged strategies for overcoming obstacles. The workshop was chaired by the Honourable Myrna Driedger, Speaker, Manitoba Legislative Assembly while the following presenters lead the discussion:

- the Honourable Nontembeko Nothemba Boyce, Speaker, KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, South Africa;
- Ms. Sarah Childs, Professor, Politics and Gender, University of Edinburgh, author, CPA Gender Sensitising Guidelines; and
- Ms. Julie Green, MLA, Legislative Assembly, Northwest Territories, Canada.

During her presentation, Ms. Green discussed how the Northwest Territories achieved gender parity in its legislature during its most recent election (2019) and some of the policies and initiatives instituted by the territory to maintain its success without gender quotas.

The workshop concluded with the adoption of the following recommendation: “Commonwealth national and sub-national legislatures should strongly support the promotion of gender-sensitive Parliaments and report progress annually at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference.”

### **Workshop G: Youth Roundtable – Cyberbullying: Youth Trolling and Mental Health**

The youth roundtable focussed on cyberbullying and its implications for youth engagement in democracy and society. The roundtable was held in two parts, and was

chaired by the Honourable Jeremiah Norbert, MP and Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Saint Lucia.

The first part included presentations by two panellists: Ms. Susan Leblanc, MLA, House of Assembly of Nova Scotia and Ms. Taiwo Owatemi, MP, United Kingdom House of Commons. In her presentation, Ms. Leblanc discussed the challenges of preventing or addressing online harassment of elected officials and young people. Ms. Owatemi discussed online harm faced by parliamentarians in the United Kingdom and the support mechanisms in development or in place in response.

During the second part of the workshop, delegates were divided into breakout groups to identify a set of strategies to address cyberbullying. Results of the breakout sessions were shared in the plenary and covered themes such as success stories in the Commonwealth on responding to cyberbullying, mental health supports for victims of online harm, and how parliaments can maintain oversight of social media companies whose platforms are used for cyberbullying.

At the end of the session, participants discussed a potential recommendation. However, it was not explicitly endorsed, noted or rejected by workshop participants.

### **Workshop H: The Climate Emergency: Are Parliaments Holding Governments to Account?**

Workshop H explored the role of parliamentarians in holding governments accountable with respect to climate change and related challenges. The discussion centred on the challenges of meeting carbon emission targets, the scaling back of policies and objectives and the disproportionate impact of this global challenge on small jurisdictions as well as marginalized and vulnerable groups. The workshop was chaired by the Ms. Claire Baker, MSP, Scottish Parliament while the following presenters led the discussion:

- Mr. Chandrasiri Bandara Ratnayake, MP, Parliament of Sri Lanka;
- the Honourable Senator Carolyn Trench-Sandiford, President of the Senate, National Assembly of Belize;
- the Honourable Viam Pillay, MP, Parliament of Fiji; and
- Ms. Vanessa Corkal, Senior Policy Advisor, International Institute for Sustainable Development, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The workshop concluded with the adoption of the following recommendation: “Parliaments have a responsibility to ensure that national climate laws and policies are robust, ambitious and in line with international commitments such as the Paris Agreement. Parliamentarians should, therefore, be bold in holding governments to account when progress is slow or lacking.”

### **65<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Association’s General Assembly**

The 65<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly took place on August 25, 2022 and was chaired by the Honourable Anthony Rota, Speaker of the House of Commons and President of the CPA. During the 65<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly, members approved several constitutional

amendments on matters including governance and membership, women’s representation in delegations to the CPC and on the CPA EXCO, provisions for virtual/hybrid meetings, increasing the population threshold for CPA small branches, the regional rotation for future appointments to the role of CPA Secretary-General, and representation of the CPwD network with a new Officer role for the CPwD chairperson. There was also agreement on a road map towards the CPA’s objective to be recognized as an international, interparliamentary organization. Further, the 65<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly approved the Parliament of the Maldives’ application to rejoin the CPA’s membership and form the CPA Maldives Branch.

Several elections also took place during or immediately following the 65<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly, as outlined in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Officials Elected on 25 August 2022**

Name	Position Elected To	Meeting Where Election Held on 25 August 2022
The Honourable Ian Liddell-Grainger, MP, Member of the United Kingdom Parliament	Chairperson of the CPA EXCO	65 <sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly
The Honourable Shri Anurag Sharma, MP, Member of the Lok Sabha, Parliament of India	CPA Treasurer	65 <sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly
The Honourable Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, MP, Majority Leader and Member of the Parliament of Ghana	Vice-Chairperson of the CPA EXCO	Meeting of the new CPA EXCO following the 65 <sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly

Speaker Rota provided closing remarks at the 65<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly. He noted the importance of the CPA as an association due to its focus on democracy and the rule of law in an unstable world. At the conclusion of the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC, Speaker Rota was presented with a commemorative silver plate to thank the CPA Canada Region for hosting the conference.

### **Conclusion**

The report above outlined the meetings and activities held prior to and during the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC. The Canadian Branch of the CPA is honoured to have been involved in hosting this international conference of Commonwealth parliamentarians.

The Canadian delegation is grateful for the opportunity to participate in the 65<sup>th</sup> conference, and to meet and network with Commonwealth parliamentarians on issues

important to all our parliaments. The Canadian Branch of the CPA looks forward to receiving more information about the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC hosted by Ghana in 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Alexandra Mendès, M.P.

Chair

Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

## **Travel Costs\***

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	65 <sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
<b>DATES</b>	August 20 to 26, 2022
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
	Hon. Salma Ataullahjan
	Hon. Jane Cordy
SENATE	Hon. Rosemary Moodie
	Hon. Jim Quinn
	Terry Duguid
	Iqra Khalid
	Marie-Hélène Gaudreau
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Robert Kitchen
	Alexandra Mendès
	Lianne Rood
	Brenda Shanahan
	Sonia Sidhu
	Warren Steinley
STAFF	Rémi Bourgault
	Brittany Collier
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	\$ 2,148.97
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	\$ 18,564.42
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	\$ 0.00
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	\$ 3,964.12
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	\$ 0.00



**MISCELLANEOUS**                    \$ 5,004.99

**TOTAL**                                **\$ 29,682.50**

*\*Only expenses not reimbursed by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association are included.*